



DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLS AND SALES PERFORMANCE OF SHOPRITE, SHOPPING MALL AKURE, ONDO STATE NIGERIA.

^{*1}David O. L., ²Adepoju, O. O. & ³Akinyomi, E. R.

¹University of Johannesburg, South Africa

²Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria.

³University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

*Corresponding Author Email: loveopeyemidavid@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This research assessed the effect of digital marketing tools on sales performance at ShopRite Shopping Mall Akure, Ondo State. The study adopted a quantitative research methodology while employing a questionnaire to collect data and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics of T-test and Chi-square. The result showed that email and social media marketing are the most used digital marketing tools adopted by ShopRite Mall, Akure Ondo State. The result also showed that the mall prefers digital marketing to traditional marketing due to easy measurement of results, high accessibility, cheaper use, comprehensive coverage, and high customer engagement. Also, the result from the T-test analysis revealed that digital marketing is significantly high with (T – 39.912) in customer base creation of larger market share, (T – 38.171), a daily increase of sales (T – 23.441), reduction in advertisement cost and increase in profitability (T – 31.926), and increment in online presence & increase in sales (T – 43.719). The Chi-Square analysis showed that digital marketing tools of email marketing (P = 0.040) and social media marketing (P = 0.012) have a significant effect on sales performance. The main challenges for digital market adoption include high competition and a high basis for fraud. The study concludes that digital marketing significantly affects sales performance and recommends stable internet service for optimal performance.

Keywords: *Digital Marketing, Email Marketing, Sales Performance, Social Media Marketing.*

LICENSE: This work by Open Journals Nigeria is licensed and published under the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided this article is duly cited.

COPYRIGHT: The Author(s) completely retain the copyright of this published article.

OPEN ACCESS: The Author(s) approves that this article remains permanently online in the open access (OA) model.

QA: This Article is published in line with "COPE (Committee on Publication Ethics) and PIE (Publication Integrity & Ethics)".

INTRODUCTION

The world has gone digital due to the rapid growth of technology, which has enhanced different aspects of life, including household appliances, healthcare facilities, financial services, public services, the educational sector, and overall economic development. According to Olson, *et al.* (2021), digital marketing is changing and revolutionizing the business landscape and business strategies. Dwivedi and Nath (2020) opined that through Digital marketing tools, sales performance has improved, unlike the traditional marketing medium, even during the Covid – 19 revenue generated. As a matter of fact, during the period when Covid – 19 was intense, technology was a bailing tool adopted to restrict and manage physical contact with people, which was significant in reducing the spread of the infection.

Furthermore, digital technology has dramatically enhanced business by securing sensitive information, improving communication processes, improving employees' productivity, and increasing market share by reaching out to a new economic market rather than operating locally. Consequently, businesses are now open to international opportunities through digital marketing tools. Also, through digital marketing, businesses now have access to new customers and markets. Historically, marketing constitutes a major strategic business adopt to create product or service awareness, brand identity, and gain customers' patronage. Considering the ever-increasing, dynamic business environment, the evolution of digital marketing is of great importance for the sustainability of the business. Digital marketing entails the marketing and advertising of a product or service via technological tools enabled by the internet. It promotes brands, services, or products through various internet-enabled media, which differs from traditional marketing that involves using electronic mediums to communicate to targeted audiences. Marketing, either digital or traditional marketing, affects performance.

In contrast, sales performance entails activities that ensure that it is a revenue-generating activity that has evolved from production to sales. Sales performance is mostly about high turnover and high-profit margin. It is a business function that keeps an organization floating and makes intended profits. According to Kotler and Keller (2012), sales performance is a product of marketing management, whereby marketing strategies' design, development, and implementation determine an organization's sales performance.

Marketing and sales are interrelated as a marketing campaign is often targeted at making sales and ensuring customers' loyalty to the brand. Digital marketing is central to businesses' success in today's contemporary world, evidenced by the promotion of products, which has led marketers to transverse online companies. Digital marketing techniques like search engine optimization, social media marketing, and pay-per-click advertising seek to capture customers' attention, turning customers into loyal buyers and improving sales performance. The advantage of digital marketing of the multi-channels by which customer now operates on the internet, whereby within several seconds, avails the opportunity consumers to get anything desired regarding the quality, value, and availability of a product. The significance of digital marketing is in line with Marketo (2015) stated that Google Think Insights revealed that 48% of customers start their inquiries on search engines, while 33% look to brand websites and 26% search within mobile applications. This study shows the importance of digital marketing, as businesses must be ready to engage both potential and actual customers online to improve sales performance.

In recent times, businesses have incorporated digital marketing as one of the key marketing strategies to generate sales growth which translates to profitability. Omondi (2017) analyzed the impact of digital marketing on sales growth of small and medium-scale businesses, while Nair (2017) conducted a study on digital marketing's influence on firms' promotion and its effect on customer feedback. Most online stores like Jumia, Konga Ali-express, and have adopted digital marketing to complement traditional marketing. This is because traditional marketing is gradually becoming obsolete, and many businesses are opting for digital marketing to gain wider coverage, lower costs of operation, and increased sales (Dwivedi, *et al.*, 2021). However, there's a need to know the digital tools or techniques to use, how to maximize their customer reach and also know how to measure the impact of their digital marketing on overall sales. This is also because of the limitation of traditional marketing, which includes minimal capacity, a longer distribution chain, and poor business management mechanisms (Suryanto and Dai, 2018).

Moreover, Is – Haq (2019) research focused on how digital marketing improves the sales performance of small and medium enterprises in Nigeria, using digital marketing tools like emails, pay-per-click, search engine optimization (SEO), social media marketing, and online advertisement. El Hachimi and Belamhiton (2021) studied the contribution of digital marketing to the business performance of 120 Morocco companies, which revealed that digital marketing positively impacts the companies' performance. Kawira and Odhiambo (2019) studied the effect of digital marketing on the performance of more than 8500 MSMEs in Kenya and found a noticeable improvement in their sales performance. In their study between digital marketing and the financial growth of small & medium-sized businesses, Mitreva and Apasieva (2022), the authors opined that digital marketing is a cost-effective marketing medium for business success. However, there is a shortage of research on the effect of digital marketing on sales performance in a conventional shopping mall, as most research on digital marketing focuses on small and medium-scale enterprises. This is the research gap this study is filling.

Therefore, this study aims to assess the effect of digital marketing on sales performance in ShopRite shopping Mall, Akure Metropolis, Ondo State, Nigeria. The Research objectives include; examining the digital marketing tools adopted by the vendors in the shopping mall, assessing the perspective of vendors on choosing between digital marketing and traditional marketing, assessing the effect of digital marketing on sales performance, and examining the challenges that vendors face in adopting digital marketing. The result of this study will guide conventional shopping malls on how digital marketing can enhance sales performance, especially on the choice of digital marketing tools that can be used in reaching out to potential and actual customers. This will give the business a competitive edge in the market. The study also contributes to the body of knowledge in the field of Marketing, especially for conventional shopping malls.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method utilized for this research is quantitative research, which entails the collection of numerical data that can be quantified and statistically tested to support or refute 'alternate knowledge' (Williams, 2007). The study area is ShopRite shopping mall, Akure metropolis. The choice of ShopRite as a case study is because it is the biggest shopping retailer in Nigeria, controlling 22% of Nigeria's retail industry, and has an influence on other shopping malls

(EI, 2020). In addition, the study adopted a purposive sampling technique with a population of fifty (50) vendors from twenty (20) shops in the mall comprising vendors, marketers, and sales managers of the shops. A questionnaire was used as the research instrument to collect the data from the respondents. The questionnaire is a structured type that provides answers to the research questions. Data gathered from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentage, frequency, and mean) and inferential statistics (T-test and Chi-square). Statistical Package for the social sciences (SPSS) software package v.25 was used in analysing the data collected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Table 1: Demographic information

Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	21	42
Female	29	58
Total	50	100
Age		
18 – 20 years	10	20
21 – 30 years	28	56
31 – 40 years	7	14
41 – 50 years	5	10
50 and above	0	0
Total	50	100
Educational Attainment		
Diploma/ OND	17	34
B.Sc/ Tech/ HND	28	56
Master's	5	10
Total	50	100
Marital Status		
Single	39	78.0
Married	11	22
Total	50	100
Work Duration/ Work Experience		
>1 years	22	44
1 – 5 years	22	44
6 – 10 years	4	8.0
11 – 15 years	1	2.0
Above 15 years	1	2.0
Total	50	100
Position Held		
Manager	19	38
Marketer	28	56
Clerical Staff	3	6.0
Total	50	100

Table 1 shows the demographic information of the respondents. The Table shows that more females in the shopping mall are vendors/ managers or marketers. This conforms with the 2018/ 2019 report that there are more women in marketing manager roles than their male counterparts (Friday Media, 2020). The table also revealed that there are more young people among the respondents, which also portrays they are tech-savvy as young people are more easily open to accepting technology than old people (Olso *et al.*, 2011). The table also denotes that the majority of the

respondents are educated and more knowledgeable, evidenced by their qualifications. The table also shows that the majority of the respondents know the subject matter of marketing.

Table 2: Digital Marketing tools adopted by vendors in Shoprite Alagbaka Akure

	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Uncertain (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
Email Marketing	62.0	32.0	4.0	2.0	0.	4.54	.676
Social Media Marketing	60.0	32.0	6.0		2.0	4.48	.789
Search Engine Optimization	38.0	52.0	2.0	6.0	2.0	4.18	.905
Affiliate Marketing	42.0	26.0	22.0	4.0	6.0	3.94	1.168
Average Mean						4.28	0.946

Table 2 above shows that the respondent strongly agreed with the use of email marketing by 62.0%, while 32.0% agreed, 4.0% were uncertain, 2.0% disagreed with the use of email marketing, and the S.D =.676, mean=4.54, which is the top most ranked mean. This indicates that vendors greatly use email marketing in Shoprite, which might be due to how easy it is to format messages to multiple people than customized messages on other digital marketing platforms. Moreover, Table 2 shows that 60.0% strongly agree with the use of social media marketing, 32% agree, while 6.0% are uncertain, 2.0 strongly disagree, and a mean of 4.48 is the most ranked mean. This result shows that Shoprite Mall's vendors use social media marketing as a digital tool. The assimilation of social media positively influenced businesses by increasing traffic, customer awareness, and overall revenues (Jones, 2015). Table 2 also shows that on the use of search engine optimization 32.0% strongly agree, 52.0% agree, 2.0% were uncertain, 6.0% strongly disagree, 2.0% disagree, and a mean of 4.18.

Table 2 shows that 42.0% of the population strongly agree with using affiliate marketing, 26.0%, agree, 22.0% are uncertain, 4.0% disagree, 6.0% strongly disagree, and a mean of 3.94, which shows that vendors in Shoprite mall make use of affiliate marketing as a digital marketing tool. This study will rank the digital marketing tools mostly used by vendors in Akure mall in descending order from the highest to the lowest. From Table 2 email marketing ranks the highest with a mean of 4.54, which shows that vendors in the mall mostly use email marketing. This can be due to low cost, reaching an already engaged audience, easy measurement of results, and instant measurement impact. The second most ranked is social media marketing, with a mean of 4.48, which shows that they use the social media market too but not as much as email marketing. The third most-ranked digital tool is search engine optimization which has a mean of 4.18. This shows that they engage in search engine optimization lesser than email and social media marketing. The least ranked digital tool is affiliate marketing; it has a mean of 3.94, which show that vendors engage less in affiliate marketing compared to other digital tools. The average mean of all the digital marketing tools is 4.29 with an SD of 0.946, reflecting that conventional shopping malls are embracing digital marketing in their business, confirming the research of Is – Haq (2019).

Table 3: Comparison between Digital Marketing and Traditional Marketing

Comparison Facts	Mean	Std. Deviation	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Uncertain %	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %
Easy measurement of the result	4.18	1.004	44.0	42.0	6.0	4.0	4.0
High Accessibility	4.14	1.125	48.0	34.0	8.0	6.0	4.0
Cheaper to use	4.08	1.066	44.0	34.0	10.0	2.0	10.0
Wider Coverage	4.04	1.160	42.0	38.0	10.0	8.0	2.0
Customers Engagement	3.92	1.122	30.0	52.0	6.0	8.0	4.0
Average Mean	4.072	1.095					

Digital marketing makes it easier to measure customer feedback and the level of engagement with marketers' content. Using social media marketing, for example, platforms like WhatsApp status view and Facebook posts make it possible for marketers to know how many customers viewed their status and engage their posts by sharing their links or liking their posts. Hence, from Table 3, 44.0% of the respondents strongly agree with this fact, 42.0% agrees, 6.0% were uncertain, 4.0% strongly disagree and 4.0% disagree with the fact that there is an easy measurement of result on digital marketing compared to traditional marketing with a mean of 4.18 which shows that they prefer digital marketing to traditional marketing because of its easy measurement of the result. This is consistent with the finding of Tejas (2021) that in digital marketing we can track and measure the result of our advertisement or website, such as how many people have seen it, what activities they do on the website, their behaviour in website, how much time they stayed in the online, and what are the demographical characteristics of particular audience these all things we can get from some of the digital marketing tools such as google analytics.

Moreover, the high accessibility of digital marketing tools compared to traditional marketing shows that digital marketing tools are majorly online. They can be accessed at any time and anywhere provided network coverage. This is unlike the traditional marketing billboard and printed flyers or magazines that can be accessed at a point. This is the view of 48.0% of the respondents, which strongly agree, 34.0% agree, 8.0% were uncertain, 6.0% strongly disagree, and 4.0% disagree and a mean of 4.14 as shown in Table 3, which shows that the respondent prefers digital marketing tools compared to traditional marketing because of its high accessibility.

Also, online marketing tools are relatively cheaper than traditional marketing tools; that is, the cost of a marketing campaign online is relatively more affordable than traditional radio and television advertisements. Table 3 revealed that 44.0% of the respondents strongly agreed and 34.0% agreed, while 10.0% were uncertain, 2.0% strongly disagreed, and 10.0% disagreed with a mean of 4.08, which shows that a larger percentage of the respondents agreed with the fact that online marketing tools are relatively cheaper compared to traditional marketing. This is consistent with the findings of Tejas (2021), which opined that old-style marketing DM is cost-effective, it will reach a more significant number of people with a very less amount. For example, displaying advertisements on social media is cheaper than a print advertisement with a targeted customer reach.

Furthermore, Digital marketing has a broader coverage compared to traditional marketing, this is as the world is turning into a global village and everyone is interconnected with the internet; this is a major advantage that digital marketing has over traditional marketing, whereby it can reach potential customers all over the globe. This is in tandem with the respondents as shown in Table 3, that 42.0% of the respondent strongly agrees, 38.0% agrees, 10.0% were uncertain, 8.0% strongly disagree, 2.0% disagree and a mean of 4.40% which shows their perspective of a wider coverage on digital marketing compared to traditional marketing. This result is consistent with the finding of Tejas (2021) that global presence in digital marketing does not only makes any business to local region but also on a global level.

In addition, Digital marketing engages customers compared to traditional marketing, which is one of the advantages of digital marketing suggested by the researcher is that digitally engages customers by providing content that relates to customers' interests this is called a pull strategy, unlike traditional marketing pushes its message to the audience with considering their area of interest and the respondent in Table 3 strongly agreed to this by 30.0%, 52.0% agreed, 6.0% were uncertain, 8.0% strongly disagreed, 4.0% disagreed with a mean of 3.92. this shows that a larger percentage of the respondent's perspectives are positive toward digital marketing compared to traditional marketing with an average mean of 4.072. This result is consistent with Ahinad (2017) that Digital marketing tools and concepts are widely taking over traditional methods worldwide.

Table 4: Effect of Digital Marketing on sales performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Strongly agree%	Agree on %	Uncertain %	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %
Increment in Online Presence and increase in sales.	4.54	.734	66.0	24.0	8.0	0	2.0
Increases in Customer base	4.44	.787	58.0	32.0	6.0	0	4.0
Reduction in advertisement cost and increase in profitability	4.26	.944	50.0	36.0	4.0	0	10.0
Creates larger market share	4.18	.774	36.0	50.0	10.0	0	4.0
The daily increase in sales	3.96	1.195	38.0	42.0	6.0	8.0	6.0
Average Mean	4.276	0.887					

Table 4 shows the effect of digital marketing on sales, ranking the mean from the highest to the lowest effect.

Digital marketing increases online presence, which in turn generates more sales with a mean of 4.54 and a standard deviation of 0.734. (66.0%) of the respondent strongly agreed, 24.0% agreed, 8.0% are uncertain, and 2.0% disagreed.

Digital marketing increases the customer base with a mean of 4.44 and a standard deviation of 0.787. (58.0%) strongly agreed, 32.0% agreed, 6.0 are uncertain, and 4.0% disagree.

Digital marketing reduces advertising costs, increasing profitability with a mean of 4.26 and a standard deviation of 0.944. (50.0%) respondents strongly agreed, 36.0% agreed, 4.0% were uncertain, and 10.0% disagreed. Digital marketing creates a larger market share with a mean of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.774. (36.0%) strongly agreed, 50.0% agreed, 10.0% were uncertain, and 4.0% disagreed. Also, Digital marketing increases sales daily with a mean of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 1.195 (38.0%) strongly agreed, 42.0% agreed, 6.0% were uncertain, 8.0% strongly disagreed, and 6.0% disagreed. It gives an average mean of 4.276 and SD of 0.887, showing that digital marketing affects sales.

Furthermore, the researchers used a T-test sampling analysis to measure the extent to which digital marketing has enhanced vendors' sales in Shoprite mall. The result from table 5 indicates that digital marketing increases online presence, which in turn generates more sales with a Mean of 4.54, SD of 0.734, and $t(49) = 43.719$, $p=.000$, which is below the confidence level, and this shows that digital marketing increase online presence and in turn increase sales of vendors in Akure mall. Also, digital marketing creates a larger market share option is confirmed by the result of Table 3 result the mean =4.18, $sd= 0.774$ and $t(49)=38.171$, $p=.000$. Digital marketing increase sale on daily basis with a mean of 3.96, $sd=1.195$ and $t(49)=23.441$, $p=.000$ this indicates that digital marketing is significant to the daily increase of vendors sales in Akure mall. Also, digital marketing reduces advertising costs and, in turn, increases profitability by a mean of 4.26, $sd=0.944$ and $t(49)=31.926$, $p=.000$. This shows that digital marketing, to a large extent, reduces advertising costs which in turn increases profitability. Digital marketing increase the customer base with a mean of 4.44, $sd=0.787$, $t(49)=39.912$, $p=.000$. Table 4.5 indicates that all the parameters of digital marketing used by the researcher to know the extent to which digital marketing enhances sales of vendors in Akure mall show that digital marketing is significant or enhances sales of vendors in Shoprite Alagbaka Akure to a large extent. This result is consistent with Olonde (2017) findings that digital marketing affects sales of small and medium sales businesses.

Table 5: T-test analysis of the effect of Digital Marketing

One-Sample Test	Test Value = 0		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	T	Df			Lower	Upper
Increase in Customer base	39.912	49	.000	4.440	4.22	4.66
Create a larger market share	38.171	49	.000	4.180	3.96	4.40
The daily increase in Sales	23.441	49	.000	3.960	3.62	4.30
Reduction in advertisement cost and increase in profitability	31.926	49	.000	4.260	3.99	4.53
Increment in online presence and increase in sales.	43.719	49		4.540	4.33	4.75

Table 6: The relationship between digital marketing tools and sales Performance

Tools	Chi-Square Value	D	P – Values
Search Engine Optimization	15.048a	12	0.239
Affiliate Marketing	16.857a	12	0.155
Email Marketing	17.605a	9	0.040
Social Media Marketing	21.103a	9	0.012

The researchers used chi-square analysis to know if the various digital marketing tools have a significant effect on sales using a confidence level of 0.05, which indicates a 5% error. Meaning any result higher than 0.05 is not significant. Table 6 above shows that only email marketing and social media marketing significantly affect the sales of vendors in Shoprite mall. This, therefore, shows that email marketing as a digital marketing tool has a significant effect on the sales of vendors in Akure mall. These findings are in line with Chaffey (2005), who noted that emails were the main source of communication before the introduction of social media; their improvement from the use of postage mails allowed communication between stakeholders and the firm to be shortened and allowed more accurate results. The results are consistent with that done by Onyango (2016) and Yasmin *et al.* (2015), who indicated a positive relationship and increase in sales because of digital marketing, email being one of them. The result also shows that social media marketing has a significant effect on sales, having a p-value of 0.012 and a chi-square value of 21.103a. These findings conform to Trusov (2009), who states that social media tools, such as chat rooms, blogs, and social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, have provided marketers with efficient ways of reaching their target audiences. The result also shows that other digital tools like search engine optimization does not have a significant effect. This result conforms to Olonde (2017) Search engine optimization as a digital marketing tool with a chi-square value of 15.048a at 12 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.239 which is above the confidence level indicates that search engine optimization does not have a significant effect on sales. The results findings are not consistent with that done by Yasmin *et al.* (2015) who indicated that digital marketing techniques greatly impact sales, of which search engine optimization is one of them. The result also shows that affiliate marketing has a chi-square value of 16.857a at 12 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.155, which is above the confidence level and, as such, indicates that affiliate marketing does not have a significant effect on sales. This is in contrast with the findings of Nwogu *et al.* (2019) that affiliate marketing is an emerging marketing tool used by e-commerce firms in Nigeria to increase profit and sales.

Table 6: Challenges faced by Vendors in adopting Digital Marketing

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Uncertain %	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %
High Competition	4.26	.876	46.0	40.0	10.0	2.0	2.0
The high basis for Fraud	4.22	1.200	62.0	14.0	14.0	6.0	4.0
The regular creation of content to suit customer interest	4.18	.919	42.0	42.0	10.0	2.0	4.0
Vendors' online presence to respond to customer needs.	4.16	.976	42.0	42.0	10.0	4.0	2.0
Poor Internet Services	4.10	1.199	48.0	34.0	6.0	8.0	4.0
Insufficient IT Personnel to maintain the website.	3.88	1.172	34.0	42.0	8.0	6.0	10.0
Average Mean	4.133	1.057					

Table 6 revealed the various challenges faced by vendors in adopting digital marketing technologies. Challenge such as high competition using digital marketing, 46.0% strongly agreed, 40.0% agreed, 10.0% were uncertain, 2.0% strongly disagreed, and 2.0% disagreed with a mean of 4.26 and sd of 0.876. This shows that a more significant percentage of the respondents face the challenge of high competition using digital marketing. For high bias of fraud using online shopping 62.0% strongly agreed, 14.0% agreed, 14.0% were uncertain, 6.0% strongly disagreed, and 4.0% disagreed with a mean of 4.22 and SD of 1.200. This also shows that vendors are faced with this challenge. The regular creation of new content to suit customer interest, 42% of the respondent strongly agreed, 42.0% agreed, 10.0% were uncertain, 2.0% strongly disagreed, and 4.0% disagreed with a mean of 4.18 and SD of 0.919, showing that the larger percentage of the respondent agreed to a large extent that regular creation of new content to suit customers interest is a challenge faced by most vendors in Shoprite mall. For vendor's online presence to respond to customers' needs, 42.0% strongly agreed, 42.0% agreed, 10.0% were uncertain, 4.0% strongly disagreed, and 2.0% disagreed with a mean of 4.16 and sd of .976, and this shows most of the vendors face this challenge of digital marketing. The challenge of poor internet service was rated thus; 48.8% strongly agreed, 34.0% agreed, 6.0% were uncertain, 8.0% strongly disagreed, and 4.0% disagreed with a mean of 4.10 and SD of 1.199, which shows that poor internet service is a challenge faced by most vendors in Shoprite mall. For insufficient IT personnel to maintain a website, 34.0% strongly agreed, 42.0% agreed, 8.0% were uncertain, 8.0% strongly disagreed, and 10.0% disagreed, with a mean of 3.88 and sd of 1.172, which shows that insufficient IT personnel to maintain a website was agreed to be a challenge faced by most vendors in Shoprite mall. All these challenges highlighted, which were answered by the response, give an average mean of 4.133 and SD of 1.057, which shows that vendors in Shoprite mall faced the challenges identified.

CONCLUSION

From the study results, it can be concluded that digital marketing has a positive effect on the sale of vendors in Shoprite Alagbaka Akure Ondo State. With regards to email marketing, the study indicated that vendors use it in ShopRite to a great extent and the effect on sales was significant. The study concludes that email marketing is important and should be used more by vendors to improve their sales. More vendors should start using personalized email which would be cheaper compared to niche marketing using traditional media. The study findings also indicated that social media marketing is a significant factor in vendors' sales in Shoprite Alagbaka and has been used to a large extent and has a positive effect on sales. The study, therefore, concluded that the social media marketing technique is effective to vendors in Shoprite Alagbaka Akure as a marketing means and helps increase sales.

The study findings regarding affiliate marketing as a digital tool indicated that affiliate marketing does not significantly affect vendors' sales in Shoprite Alagbaka Akure, this led to the conclusion that affiliate marketing does not affect sales in Shoprite Alagbaka, Akure Ondo state. The challenges experienced by vendors in Shoprite Alagbaka with regard to the implementation of digital marketing were analyzed and rated on the extent to which they affect adoption. From the study findings, the study concluded that high competition using digital marketing, the high bias of fraud by people using online shopping, the regular creation of new content to suit customers' interests, vendors' online presence to meet customers' needs, and poor internet service and insufficient IT personnel to maintain website were the biggest challenges that should be focused on to improve digital marketing adoption.

From the research findings, it is recommended that service providers should deliver stable internet service to encourage vendors' online presence on digital platforms. More IT personnel should be employed, to maintain the website and follow up on leads from digital marketing tools.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Organizations should also look at how digital marketing affects other aspects of a business, such as brand loyalty and customer relationship management since the organization is more than sales and profits. Also, other factors that affect sales and profitability of vendors should be analyzed since it is known that sales are not affected only by marketing or digital marketing but by a combination of internal and external factors to an organization. Finally, other analytical techniques apart from that used by the study should be done by researchers to determine how digital marketing affects sales in an organization.

REFERENCES

- Association, A. M. (2021). Marketing. Retrieved from www.ama.org: <http://www.ama.org/the-definition-of-marketing-what-is-marketing/> Accessed on 22/03/2022
- Atwong, C. T. (2015). A Social Media Practicum: An Action-Learning Approach to Social Media Marketing and Analytics, *Marketing Education Review*, **25**:(1) 27-31. DOI:10.1080/10528008.2015.999578
- Bawm, Z.L., & Nath, R.P. (2014). A Conceptual Model for effective email marketing. *2014 17th International Conference on Computer and Information Technology (ICCIT)*, 250-256.

- Cant, M. C. and Wiid, J. A., (2016). The use of traditional marketing tools by SMEs in an emerging economy: a South African perspective. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 14(1), 64-70. doi:10.21511/ppm.14(1).2016.07
- Dwivedi, R. and Nath, P., (2020). Digital Marketing: Disruption, Expansion and its impact on Business. *KIIT Journal of Management*, 1: 25 - 44.
- EI (2020). Shoprite controls 22% of Nigeria's formal retail, their future in Nigeria will be driven by indigenous Retailers. Retrieved from: <https://estateintel.com/insights/shoprite-controls-22-of-nigerian-formal-retail-their-future-in-nigeria-will-be-driven-by-indigenous-retailers> Accessed 22/04/2022.
- El Hachimi, I., Ait Lhassan, I. and Belamhitou, M. (2021). The Contribution of Digital Marketing to Business Performance: The Case of Companies in the Northern Region of Morocco. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 17(8). <https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2021.v17n8p82>
- Fariborzi, E., and M. Zahedifard. (2012). Email Marketing: Advantages, Disadvantages and improving techniques. *International Journal of e-education, e-business, e-management and e-learning*, 2(3): 232 – 236.
- Friday Media (2020). Occupational gender differences in the marketing industry. Friday Media. Retrieved from: <https://blog.simplymarketingjobs.co.uk/blog/occupational-gender-differences-in-the-marketing-industry/> Accessed 22/05/2022.
- Hall, J. (2021). Five channels. Retrieved from useful type of digital marketing: <http://fivechannels.com/useful-types-of-digital-marketing/> Accessed on 22/03/2022
- Hoffman, D. L. and Novak, T. P. (2000). How to Acquire Customers on the Web. *Harvard business review*. Retrieved: <https://hbr.org/2000/05/how-to-acquire-customers-on-the-web> Accessed on 04/04/2022.
- IAB Australia. (2019). Affiliate marketing handbook. Retrieved from http://www.iab.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/IAB-Affiliate-Marketing-Handbook_2019.pdf Accessed 16/04/2022
- Is-haq, H. O. (2019). Digital Marketing and Sales Improvement in Small and medium scale enterprises in Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovation and Research in Educational Sciences*, 6(6):803 - 810.
- Israel, G, D. (2020). Retrieved from Determining Sample: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pd006> Accessed on 14/04/2022.
- Ivkovic, M. and Milanov, D. (2010). Affiliate Internet Marketing: Concept and Application analysis. *International Conference on Education and Management Technology*, 391-323.
- Jagongo, A. and Kinyua, C. (2016). The Social Media and entrepreneurship growth. *International journal of humanities and social science*, 3(10): 213-227.
- Jain, R. (2014). Impact of social media marketing on SME businesses. Retrieved from: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Impact-of-Social-Media-Marketing-on-SME-Business-Jain/2aba1415f33c881a04eb8c3efd6cd943af66767d> Accessed 02/04/2022.
- Jobber, D. and Ellis-Chadwick F. (2013). Principle and practice of marketing 7th edition. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Jones, N. B. (2015). Impact of social media on small businesses. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise development*, 22:611-632.

- Jurkiewicz, C. L. and Brown, R. G. (1998). Generational Comparisons of Public Employee Motivation. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, **18**(4): 18-37. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X9801800403>
- Kawira, K.D., Mukulu, E. and Odhiambo, R. (2019). Effect of Digital Marketing on the Performance of MSMEs in Kenya, *Journal of Marketing & Communication*, **2**(1):1-23
- Khamis, S Ang and Welling. (2017). Self-branding, 'micro-celebrity' and the rise of Social Media influencers. *Celebrity Studies*, **8**(2):191-208.
- Kotler, P. (2008). Principle of marketing 5th ed. Essex: Pearson Education.
- Kotler, P and Keller, K. L. (2012). Marketing management. 14th edition. Pearson Education Inc. Publishing as Prentice Hall.
- Lutz, E. (2021). Digital Agency Network. Retrieved from <http://digitalagencynetwork.com/what-are-the-differences-between-inbound-and-outbound/> Accessed 20/04/2022.
- Machado. C.J. and Davim, P. (2016). Management and industrial engineering. In MBA Theory and application of Business and Management principles, 53-54. Switzerland: Springer nature.
- Mandloys, A. D. (2021). Digital Marketing. Retrieved from content marketing essentials: <http://www.mandloys.com/contentmarketing/>. Accessed 15/11/2021
- Mitreva, M., Arsova, M., and Apasieva, T. J., (2022). Digital Marketing and the potential for financial growth of small and medium - sized businesses. UDC 658.8:004/334.72.012.63/.64
- Olson, E. M., Olson, K. M., Czaplewski, A. J., and Key, T. M., (2020). Business Strategy and the Management of Digital Marketing. *Kelley School of Business, Business Horizons*, **64** (2021), 285 - 293.
- Olson, K. E., O'Brien, M. A., Rogers, W. A. and Charness, N. (2011). Diffusion of Technology: Frequency of Use for Younger and Older Adults. *Ageing international*, **36**(1), 123–145. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12126-010-9077-9>
- Omondi, O.J. (2017). Impact of digital marketing on Sales Growth in small and medium scale enterprises. Master in Business Administration, University of Nairobi. Retrieved from: http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/11295/103209/Olonde_Impact%20of%20Digital%20Marketing%20on%20Sales%20Growth%20of%20Small%20and%20Medium%20Enterprises%20in%20Nairobi,%20Kenya.pdf?sequence=1 Accessed 03/04/2022
- Oyango, K. (2019). Influence of Digital Marketing Strategies on Performance of Cutflowers Exporting Firms in Kenya. Nairobi: University of Nairobi Research Archive. Retrieved from: <http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/handle/11295/98646> Accessed 04/04/2022
- Patrutiu Baltes, L., (2016). Inbound marketing-the most important digital marketing strategy. *Bulletin Of the Transilvania University Of Brasov. Series V: Economic Sciences*, **9** (2), 61-68.
- Prussakov, E. (2007). A practical Guide to Affiliate Marketing. AM Navigator LL.
- Ryan., D. and Jones. C. (2009). Understanding Digital Marketing: Marketing strategies for engaging the digital generation. Replika Press Pvt Limited.

- Sudha, M. and Sheena, K. (2017). impact of Influencers in Consumer Decision Process: The Fashion industry. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management*, 14-30.
- Suryanto, Hermanto, B. and Dai, R. M., (2018). Traditional Market Issues. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities*, **225**: 533 - 537.
- Taiminen, H. and Heikki, K. (2015). The usage of digital marketing channel in SMEs. *Journal of small businesses and enterprise development*, 22(4), 633-651.
- The Saylor foundation. (2020). Retrieved from <http://www.saylor.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/stokes3.pdf> Accessed on 12/03/2022
- Turban, E. (2010). Electronic commerce 2010 6th edition. New Jersey: Pearson education.
- UAB. (2021). UAB COLLAT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS. Retrieved from The University of Alabama at birmingham: <http://www.businessdegree.uab.edu/blog/what-is-the-difference-between-organic-and-paid-marketing/> Accessed 12/04/2022
- Wanjuki, C. (2014). The growth of digital marketing and its impact on customer service at Barclays Bank of kenya, meru Branch. University of Nairobi: Unpublished.
- Williams, C., (2007). Research Methods. *Journal of Business & Economic Research*, 65 - 72.
- Yasmin, A., Tasneem, S., & Fatema, K., (2015). Effectiveness of digital marketing in the challenging age: An empirical study. *International journal of management science and business administration* 1(5), 69-80.
- Zhang. S. and Cabage, N. (2017). Search Engine Optimization: Comparison of Link Building and Social sharing. *Journal of computer information System*, 09-10.